



# Idaho Fish and Game

## Blackfoot River, Georgetown Summit, and Montpelier Wildlife Management Areas Newsletter

### February 2015

### Greetings!

This newsletter is intended to inform all of our customers of what's happening on the Idaho Fish and Game's Blackfoot River, Georgetown Summit, and Montpelier Wildlife Management Areas.

This last year went by very fast again but we accomplished a lot of projects on all of our Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs).

Work on the WMAs consisted mostly of maintaining access areas, fences, and conducting weed control.

#### Blackfoot River WMA:

Our let-down fences were put up by community service in the spring. We spent one day letting them down in the fall. Several days were spent repairing additional fences and parking areas. We also replaced some old buck and rail fence along the Blackfoot River Road from the main gate north about 100 yards. The main parking corral north of the bunkhouse and the river parking corral were both replaced.



Eleven days were spent controlling noxious weeds. We continued tradition by providing the facilities for the Highlands Cooperative Weed Management Area work day lunch break. We had another great effort with Agrium sending 14 folks to help with the spray day. Thank you Agrium. Weeds that were targeted on the WMAs are all on the Idaho noxious weed list, they include: Yellow Toadflax, Dyers Woad, Black Henbane, Hounds Tongue, Leafy Spurge, Canada Thistle, and Musk Thistle.

We are in the process of marking the WMA boundary every 660 feet with carsonite signs or fence placards. We have marked the south boundary and along most the main roads.

Agrium has been drilling core samples at several sites on the northeast corner of the WMA over the past couple of years to get a better handle on anticipated extraction sites and effort needed. Several ground water wells are being monitored increasing traffic and activity on the WMA. The tentative mining operation is slated to start in 2016.

There were a few teleconferences with Bonneville Power Administration discussing avian avoidance (markers) and timber removal for the Hooper Springs Transmission Line that is only proposed but seems more likely to cross the WMA. The process is part of a supplemental EIS to the original Hooper Springs Transmission line proposal.

Our fisheries crew still has pit tag readers placed across the Blackfoot River, and continues to conduct some telemetry work on Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout. They are gathering data on migration timing and the duration of migration for both adult and juvenile fish. Contact Dave Teuscher or Arnie Brimmer for more information.

#### Georgetown Summit WMA:

We continue to annually monitor a nearby sharp-tailed grouse lek and discovered another lek in the vicinity.

This makes two verified sharp-tailed grouse leks within Bear Lake County. We searched the WMA and nearby IDL property for sage grouse leks this past spring but did not find any. We did, however, observe a sage grouse/sharp-tailed grouse hybrid.



Replaced Fence

Ten days were spent controlling noxious weeds. We again entered into a grazing agreement with a neighbor upstream of the WMA. Light grazing was allowed on the Walker pasture in exchange for resting his riparian pasture along the river. Weed control and fence maintenance on the Walker pasture were also part of the exchange. We still have a share crop agreement with our neighboring landowner to the south. Weed control and wildlife habitat management are the main purposes of the agreement from the Department perspective.

Six thousand feet of fence bordering a neighbor on the south side of Hwy. 30 was torn out and replaced. The portion from the highway to the top of the hill is 4 strand let-down barbed wire fence to allow for big game movement during the winter and prolong the life of the fence. The remaining portion is standard 3 strand barbed wire fence. Approximately 800 feet of old interior fence was also removed using community service. We may remove more of the interior fences this next year to facilitate wildlife movement depending on time and funding constraints. We are

planning work on an interior motorized trail which will involve grading, installation of waterbars, and some graveling.

#### Montpelier WMA:

One day was spent controlling noxious weeds on the MWMA.

At each of our WMA main parking areas we continue to request voluntary user sign in to verify demographics, frequency and purpose of visits. Visitors are only requested to sign in once each year. Please help us document public use on the WMAs.

#### Input:

We have almost finished up the process of rewriting the Blackfoot River, Georgetown Summit and Montpelier WMA management plans. Thank you for your input on management of our WMAs. It has helped us develop these plans. Upon approval by the Fish and game Commission they will be posted on our web site (<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/wildlife/wma>).

If you make interesting wildlife observations please contact us or report it at: <https://fishandgame.idaho.gov/species/observations/add>. We would be particularly interested in sightings of sage-grouse or sharp-tailed grouse in the vicinity of any of these WMAs. If you see a Fish and Game violation please contact your local Conservation Officer, Sherriff's Office or call the CAP Line at 1-800-632-5999.

For information on the fisheries work going on in the upper Blackfoot River drainage, contact Dave Teuscher or Arnie Brimmer at: (208)-232-4703. Their email addresses are: [david.teuscher@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:david.teuscher@idfg.idaho.gov) and [arnie.brimmer@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:arnie.brimmer@idfg.idaho.gov) respectively.

If you have comments that may benefit these WMAs, or you would like to volunteer with projects, please feel free to contact me at the Fish and Game office by telephone: (208)-236-1255 or email: [don.jenkins@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:don.jenkins@idfg.idaho.gov). I am always interested in ideas to make the BRWMA and surrounding lands better places for wildlife.

Don Jenkins - Regional Habitat Biologist

